

## English Rebel Songs

### **The Cutty Wren**

Oh where are you going? said Milder to Moulder  
Oh we may not tell you said Festel to Fose  
We're off to the wood said John the Red Nose  
We're off to the wood said John the Red Nose

And what will you do there? said Milder to Moulder  
Oh we may not tell you said Festel to Fose  
We'll shoot the cutty wren said John the Red Nose  
We'll shoot the cutty wren said John the Red Nose

Oh how will you cut him up? said Milder to Moulder  
Oh we may not tell you said Festel to Fose  
With knives and with forks said John the Red Nose  
With knives and with forks said John the Red Nose

And who'll get the spare ribs? said Milder to Moulder  
Oh we may not tell you said Festel to Fose  
We'll give them all to the poor said John the Red Nose  
We'll give them all to the poor said John the Red Nose

### **The Diggers Song**

You noble diggers all stand up now, stand up now  
You noble diggers all stand up now  
The wasteland to maintain seeing cavaliers by name  
Your digging does maintain and persons all defame  
Stand up now, stand up now

With spades and hoes and ploughs stand up now, stand up now  
With spades and hoes and ploughs stand up now  
Your freedom to uphold seeing cavaliers are bold  
To kill you if they could and rights from you to hold  
Stand up now diggers all

The lawyers they conjoin stand up now stand up now  
The lawyers they conjoin stand up now  
To arrest you they advise, such fury they devise, the devil in them lies  
And hath blinded both their eyes  
Stand up now, stand up now

The clergy they come in stand up now, stand up now  
The clergy they come in stand up now  
The clergy they come in and say it is a sin  
That we should now begin our freedom for to win

Stand up now diggers all

The gentry are all round stand up now, stand up now  
The gentry are all round stand up now  
The gentry are all round on each side the are found  
Their wisdom so profound to cheat us of our ground  
Stand up now stand up now

The club is all their law, stand up now stand up now  
The club is all their law, stand up now  
The club is all their law, to keep poor men in awe  
That they no vision saw to maintain such a law  
Stand up now diggers all

### **Colliers March**

The summer was over, the season unkind  
In harvest a snow, how uncommon to find  
The times were oppressive and well be it known  
That hunger will strongest of fences break down  
'Twas then from themselves the black gentry stepped out  
With bludgeons determined to stir up a rout  
The prince of the party who revelled from home  
Was a terrible fellow and called Irish Tom  
He brandished his bludgeon with dexterous skill  
And close to his elbow was placed Barley Will  
Their instantly followed a numerous train  
As cheerful as bold Robin Hood's merry men  
Sworn to remedy a capital fault  
Bring down the exorbitant price of the malt  
From Dudley to Walsall they trip it along  
And Hampton was truly alarmed at the throng  
Women and children wherever they go  
Shouting out 'Oh the brave Dudley boys! Oh!'  
With nailers and spinners the cavalcade joined  
The markets to lower their flattering design  
Six days out of seven poor nailing boys get  
Little else at their meals but potatoes to eat  
For bread hard they labour, good things never carve  
And swore 'twere as well to be hanged as to starve  
Such are the feelings in every land  
Nothing necessity's call can withstand  
And riots are certain to sadden the year  
When sixpenny loaves as three pounders appear

### **The Triumph Of General Ludd**

No more chant your old rhymes about bold Robin Hood  
His feats I do little admire  
I'll sing the achievements of General Ludd  
Now the hero of Nottinghamshire  
Brave Ludd was to measure of violence unused  
'Til his sufferings became so severe  
That at last to defend his own interests he roused  
And for the great fight did prepare

The guilty may fear but no vengeance he aims  
At the honest man's life or estate  
His wrath is entirely confined to wide frames  
And to those that old prices abate  
Those engines of mischief were sentenced to die  
By unanimous vote of the trade  
And Ludd who can all opposition defy  
Was the grand executioner made

And when in the work he destruction employs  
Himself to no method confines  
By fire and by water he gets them destroyed  
For the elements aid his designs  
Whether guarded by soldiers along the highway  
Or closely secured in a room  
He shivers them up by night and by day  
And nothing can soften their doom

He may censure great Ludd's disrespect for the laws  
Who ne'er for a moment reflects  
That foul imposition alone was the cause  
Which produced these unhappy effects  
Let the haughty the humble no longer oppress  
Then shall Ludd sheath his conquering sword  
His grievances instantly meet with redress  
Than peace shall be quickly restored

Let the wise and the great lend their aid and advice  
Nor e'er their assistance withdraw  
Till full-fashioned work at the old-fashioned price  
Is established by custom and law  
Then the trade when this arduous contest is o'er  
Shall raise in full splendour its head  
And colting and cutting and squaring no more  
Shall deprive honest workers of bread

### **Chartist Anthem**

A hundred years a thousand years  
We're marching on the road  
The going isn't easy  
Yet we've got a heavy load  
Oh we've got a heavy load

The way is blind with blood and sweat  
And death sings in our ears  
But time is marching on our side  
We will defeat the years  
Oh we will defeat the years

We men of bone of shrunken shank  
Our only treasure dearth  
Women who carry at the breast  
Heirs to the hungry earth  
Oh heirs to the hungry earth

Speak with one voice, we march, we rest  
And march again upon the years  
Sons of our sons are listening  
To hear the Chartist cheers  
Oh, to hear the Chartist cheers

### **The Bad Squire**

The merry brown hares came a-leaping  
Over the crest of the hill  
Where the clover and corn lay a-sleeping  
Under the moonlight so still  
Leaping so late and so early  
'Till under their bite and their tread  
The swedes and the wheat and the barley  
Lay cankered and trampled and dead

A poacher's poor widow sat sighing  
On the side of the moss-patterned bank  
Where under the gloom of the fir-woods  
One acre of ground laying rank  
She watched over barely grown clover  
Where rabbit or hare never ran  
For the ground that it all covered over  
Hid the blood of a good murdered man

She thought of the shaded plantation  
And the hares and her husband's own blood  
And the voice of her own indignation  
Rose up to the throne of her God  
There's blood on your new foreign shrubs, Squire  
There's blood on your pointer's cold feet  
There's blood on the game that you sell Squire  
And there's blood on the game that you eat

You have sold out the labouring man, Squire  
Both body and soul for to shame  
To pay for your seat in the House, Squire  
And to pay for the feed of your game  
You made him a poacher yourself, Squire  
When you'd give not the work nor the meat  
And your barley-fed hares robbed the garden  
At our starving poor little one's feet

When packed into one tiny chamber  
Man, mother and little ones lay  
While the rain pattered in on our bride bed  
And the walls barely held out the day  
When we lay in the heat of the fever  
On the mud and the clay of the floor  
'Till you parted us all for three months, Squire  
And we knocked at the working house door

So to kennels and liveried varlets  
Where you starved your own daughter of bread  
And worn out with liquor and harlots  
See your heirs at your feet lying dead  
When you follow them into your heaven  
And your soul rots asleep in the grave  
Then Squire, you will not be forgiven  
By the free men you took as your slaves

### **Song Of The Times**

You working men of England one moment now attend  
While I unfold the treatment of the poor upon this land  
For nowadays the factory lords have brought the labour low  
And daily are contriving plans to prove our overthrow

So arouse! You sons of freedom! The world seems upside down  
They scorn the poor man as a thief in country and in town

There's different parts in Ireland, it's true what I do state  
There's hundreds that are starving for they can't get food to eat  
And if they go unto the rich to ask them for relief  
They bang their door all in their face as if they were a thief

So arouse! You sons of freedom! The world seems upside down  
They scorn the poor man as a thief in country and in town

Alas how altered are the times, rich men despise the poor  
And pay them off without remorse, quite scornful at their door  
And if a man is out of work his Parish pay is small  
Enough to starve himself and wife, his children and all

So arouse! You sons of freedom! The world seems upside down  
They scorn the poor man as a thief in country and in town

So to conclude and finish these few verses I have made  
I hope to see before it's long men for their labour paid  
Then we'll rejoice with heart and voice and banish all our woes  
Before we do old England must pay us what she owes

So arouse! You sons of freedom! The world seems upside down  
They scorn the poor man as a thief in country and in town

### **Smashing Of The Van**

Attend you gallant Irishmen and listen for a while  
I'll sing to you the praises of the sons of Erin's Isle  
It's of those gallant heroes who voluntarily ran  
To release two Irish shamrocks from an English prison van  
The eighteenth of September it was in that dreadful year  
When sorrow and excitement ran throughout all Lancashire  
At a gathering of the Irish boys they volunteered each man  
To release those Irish prisoners out of the prison van

(chorus)

Hurrah! My lads for freedom  
Let's all join heart and hand  
May the Lord have mercy on the boys  
That helped to smash the van

In Manchester one morning those good heroes did agree  
Their leaders, Kelly and Deasy, should have their liberty  
They drank a health to Ireland and soon made up a plan  
To meet the prisoners on the road and take and smash the van

(chorus)

With courage bold those heroes went and soon the van did stop  
They cleared the guards from back and front and then smashed in the top  
But in blowing open of the lock they chanced to kill a man  
So three men must die on the scaffold high for smashing of the van

(chorus)

So now kind friends I will conclude I think it would be right  
That all true hearted Irish men together should unite  
Together should sympathise my friends and do the best we can  
To keep the memories evergreen of the boys that smashed the van

(chorus)

### **World Turned Upside Down**

Through eating too much supper  
Before I went to bed  
Strange thoughts came o'er my slumber  
Strange thoughts came in my head

This world was topsy-turvy  
And people of renown  
Were doing the most peculiar things  
As they world turned upside down

I dreamt all men were equal  
And there were no starving poor  
And nations never did quarrel  
Nor never went to war

I dreamt all men were angels  
And women ne'er wore a frown  
Old maids they had large families  
As the world turned upside down

### **Poverty Knock**

(Chorus)

'Poverty poverty knock,' my loom is a-saying all day  
Poverty poverty knock, gaffer's too skinny to pay  
Poverty poverty knock, keeping one eye on the clock  
I know I can guttle when I hear my shuttle go, 'poverty poverty knock'

Up every morning at five  
I wonder that we keep alive  
Tired and yawning another cold morning  
It's back to the dreary old drive

(chorus)

Oh dear we're going to be late  
Gaffer is stood at the gate  
We're out of pocket our wages they'll docket  
We'll have to buy grub on the slate

(chorus)

And when all our wages they'll bring  
We're often short of a string  
While we are fratching with gaffer for snatching  
We know to his brass he will cling

(chorus)

Sometimes a shuttle flies out  
And gives some poor woman a clout  
There she lies bleeding but nobody's heeding  
Oh who's going to carry her out?

(chorus)

Oh dear, my poor head it sings  
I should have woven three strings  
But threads are breaking and my back is aching  
Oh dear how I wish I had wings

(chorus)

### **Idris Strike Song**

Have you been to work at Idris?  
No we won't go in today!  
For we're standing by our comrade  
And we'll never run away  
She stood bravely by the Union  
And she spoke up for us true  
And if she gets the sack  
No we never shall go back  
What e'er they do, what e'er they do



Now you boys who're washing bottles  
It really is a shame  
To take the place of women  
Don't you think you are to blame?  
Come with us and join the Union  
Never heed what Idris say  
We are out to right the wrong  
And now we shan't be long  
Hip hip hooray, hip hip hooray!

Master William, Master William  
You must give in once again  
It was wrong to sack a woman  
With two children to maintain  
Thirteen years she's faithful served you  
Though she was three minutes late  
But our little sister Anne  
Why she never checked the man  
At the gate, at the gate

Oh you great king in the palace  
And you statesman at the top  
When you're drinking soda water  
Or imbibing ginger pop  
Think of some who work at Idris  
For very little pay  
And who only get nine bob  
For a most unpleasant job  
Alack-a-day, alack-a-day

Now then girls all join the Union  
Whatever you may be  
In pickles, jam, or chocolate  
Or packing pounds of tea  
For we all want better wages  
And this is what we say:  
'We are out to right the wrong  
And now we shan't be long  
Hip hip hooray, hip hip hooray!'

### **Hanging On The Old Barbed Wire**

If you want to find the general  
I know where he is  
I know where he is

I know where he is  
If you want to find the general  
I know where he is  
He's pinning another medal on his chest  
I saw him, I saw him  
Pinning another medal on his chest

If you want to find the colonel  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
If you want to find the colonel  
I know where he is  
He's sitting in comfort stuffing his bloody gut  
I saw him, I saw him  
Sitting in comfort stuffing his bloody gut

If you want to find the seargeant  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
If you want to find the seargent  
I know where he is  
He's drinking all the company rum  
I saw him, I saw him  
Drinking all the company rum

If you want to find the private  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
I know where he is  
If you want to find the private  
I know where he is  
He's hanging on the old barbed wire  
I saw him, I saw him  
Hanging on the old barbed wire  
Hanging on the old barbed wire

### **Coal Not Dole**

It stands so proud, the wheels so still  
A ghost-like figure on the hill  
It seems so strange there is no sound  
Now there are no men underground

What will become of this pit yard?  
Where men once trampled faces hard

So tired and weary their shift's done  
Never having seen the sun

There'll always be a happy hour  
For those with money, jobs and power  
They'll never realise the hurt  
They cause to men they treat like dirt

Will it become a sacred ground?  
Foreign tourists gazing round  
Asking if men once worked here  
Way beneath this pit-head gear

Empty trucks once filled with coal  
Lined up like men on the dole  
Will they e'er be used again?  
Or left for scrap just like the men?

There'll always be a happy hour  
For those with money, jobs and power  
They'll never realise the hurt  
They cause to men they treat like dirt